

# PEACE NEWS

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2d.

## The Babe In The Manger

**G**OD knows whether on this Christmas Day in the year of our Lord 1940, the prayer of the Pope that there shall be a time of truce—"either spontaneously or by a mutual accord"—will have prevailed. The mutual accord has been rejected in advance by our statesmen; but the spontaneous truce might happen. And that would be by far the better thing—an instinctive upsurge of the human heart of man against his enslavement to the diabolical necessity of mutual butchery. We are deeply grateful to His Holiness for letting loose that word "spontaneous."

Let men for this one holy day ignore their earthly masters and obey their heavenly one. Amen.

So Christ would be born again—in that eternal rebirth of which the mystics speak—in the hearts and souls of men. Without that rebirth Christmas is, at best, a kindly pagan festival. At best, indeed! Hardly have I written the words than I am pierced with the sense of their bitter mockery. How far, how infinitely far, are we today below the level of a kindly, pagan festival. The pagans would look upon massed and mechanical fratricide as a hideous and unholy thing; while to us, as we are, a kindly pagan festival would be an earthly paradise.

Yet I am sure that millions on millions of our inarticulate fellow-men feel the degradation of our human condition as bitterly as we pacifists, and have as burning a desire to escape from it. Somehow we must speak to these, and for these. And at this moment it seems to me that we shall not be able to speak for them, and for them, unless Christ is re-born in our hearts, and our souls are as the mangers where the new-born babe is laid.

This—although it is the mystery of mysteries—is an utterly simple thing. The rebirth of Christ in the human heart does not require an apparatus of ritual and dogma for its accomplishment. We have only to think of him, of all he taught and all he endured, because he believed in us, because he believed we were capable of responding to what he thought us, to experience that our stubborn hearts grow tender with love of him. As the birth of Christ was the birth of a new tenderness in the human race, so the eternal rebirth of Christ is the birth of a new tenderness in the individual human soul.

Then, it is true, the horror of the iron necessity that holds us all becomes for a moment a naked agony. But it passes; and a new charity takes possession of us. We seem to see, more clearly than before, that it is not that human hearts grow colder or more steely, but that humanity has lost its way.

And no wonder! In this new world where man has become the master of vast mechanical powers, of astonishing inventions year by year, day by day, whereby nature was brought into subjection to him—in this new strange world, which is the more strange because we think ourselves familiar with it—there was no beaten path for man to follow. At the edge of this new-found land the trodden highway of centuries abruptly ended. The old morality that had been sufficient was sufficient no longer. The behaviour that used to bring prosperity, now brought ruin; the way of life turned into the way of death.

## The Price of Peace

by

**VERA BRITAIN**

We had sought for peace, but did not know or would not face the price which must be paid for having it. We tried to keep peace rather than to make it....

Let us pray that He will use us, if it be His will, as the means through which the domination of force and falsehood is broken and mankind set free to build a new way of life.

That He will teach us what it costs to be so used, and make us willing to pay that cost.

From *The First Year of War: A Review and Rededication*,  
issued by St. Paul's Cathedral

**A**T this Christmas season, in which incongruous mess-ages of peace and good will are being exchanged by a world of warring nations, it is peculiarly relevant for pacifists to inquire just why so little exists of either. Our investigation should, however, begin with a word of warning.

As readers of Peace News and persons who still endeavour to work for peace by the comparatively few methods still allowed us, we may perhaps feel that we are entitled to make this inquiry from a detached and superior point of view. If we start with such an assumption, the attempt will land us in Limbo, for the first essential of our investigation is the abandonment of self-righteousness.

The peace movement is part of the general failure in which the Europe of today finds itself involved. We are all members one of another, and never more so than in times of political calamity. Had the peace movement of the past two decades been more vigorous and more effective, it might

have prevented or at least mitigated the enormity of the present disaster. With the rest of our countrymen we cannot acquit ourselves of failure to pay, with sufficient intelligence and self-sacrifice, the price of peace.

### CONDITIONS OF PEACE

What is that price? It is dictated by one simple but apparently almost unattainable human quality—the readiness to admit that we may have been wrong before we begin to blame other people. Everything on which the making of peace depends—the willingness to offer sacrifices before we demand them, the ability to see an enemy's point of view as well as to express our own, the capacity for recognizing the degree to which we have made him suffer instead of merely broadcasting the measure of our own anguish—flows from the extent to which the recalcitrant human nature is able to say: "I have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son."

It often seems to me strange that, in view of the schools of which they are the products, our statesmen in particular seem so singularly to lack

this saving grace of honest humility. We are apt to laugh at undue reverence for "the old school tie," but—full of shortcomings as the public school system may be—there is one valuable principle which is the essence of its quality. A public school-boy must never be a "sneak"; he must not betray the known offence of another, but must always "own up" if he himself is in the wrong. Anything else is not "cricket."

It is odd how many old Etonians and others appear to act in a sense precisely contrary to this principle the moment that they attain political office. The game played by our Prime Ministers, Foreign Secretaries, Lord Privy Seals, and other guardians of the national conscience might be described as chess, bridge, diabolio, or any other complicated game of skill. It certainly is not "cricket" in the simple public school sense of the word.

### "HE" MUST REPENT FIRST

Over and over again, since the war began, I have been present at conferences, both public and private, held to discuss the possible terms and conditions of a negotiated peace. These conferences have been attended not by reactionary diehards, but by enlightened churchmen and liberal politicians who deplore the war and really desire to see it come to an end.

Yet invariably such gatherings have produced a majority of speakers who state that the very question of negotiation cannot be considered while Hitler is in power. If, it is sometimes added, Herr Hitler were prepared—as of course he would not be—to make every concession that we demanded, to restore unconditionally Poland, Czechoslovakia, Norway, and the rest, to acknowledge himself wholly in the wrong and publicly repent of the evil he has done, then we might perhaps consider negotiation, but on no other terms.

Speeches of this type seldom contain a word about any contribution to the sum-total of sacrifice that we ourselves might make, or the remotest historical realization that—just as our prompt entry into the race for empire did much to bring about the last war—so our treatment of the Weimar Republic caused the rise of Nazidom and the present conflict.

Yet it was not a pacifist, but General Sir Ian Hamilton, who exclaimed in 1919: "Fatal Versailles! Not a line, not one line in your Treaty, to show that those boys, our friends who were dead, had been any better than the emperors; not one line to stand for the kindness of England; not a word to bring back some memory of the generosity of her sons."

### THE CHRISTIAN WAY

If ever we are to achieve any constructive results, the attitude of these worthy condition-makers is precisely the fashion in which the question of negotiation should not be approached.

This is a Christian country, and though, like other Christian countries, it is behaving in a very unchristian fashion, Christianity is still its official religion, and Bishops, Members of Parliament, and other politicians presumably accept the statement that "The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord." Now whether or not we believe that Christ would have been an opponent of war in all circumstances, his teaching on the subject of negotiation is quite unequivocal.

(Continued on page 2)

## CHRIST and ANTI-CHRIST



Drawn by **RICHARD MURRY**

Now there is no escape from the ruin and the death but by the birth of a new tenderness: of heart and hand, of mind and imagination. Where that is accomplished, Christ is re-born even though his name is never spoken. In the strength of his peace which passes understanding let us preach the peace of understanding, which is also his peace. Peace on earth to men of good will!

**JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY**

### £40 A Week

**T**HANK you, friends! The £1,000 mark was passed a week ago. During the week we have received £62 13s 3d for the Fighting Fund, making the total £1044 13s 2d. Since it is 26 weeks since the new Fund was opened, on June 7 last, the average rate of contribution has been £40 a week. It is an inspiring response. If this rate is maintained through the coming year, as I feel sure it will be, we shall have broken the back of our task—to build a printing press for the new society. Once again, thanks!—The Editor.



# The Stone of Stumbling

**T**HE ABC of true Christianity is something over which the world still stumbles, something it still rejects, something it still refuses to believe in. Christ himself spoke of it as a stone, on which, if a man fell, he would be broken; which, if it fell on him, would grind him to powder; a stone which the builders of the world had rejected, but which was destined to become the headstone of the corner.

And what we need, and mostly lack as Christians, is belief that that stone will become the headstone of the corner, not in the next world, but in this.

It was man's power to apprehend that there was in life something undiscovered and unknown which started him on his long search for God, and on devising that which should the better relate him to the God of his conception—a religion.

True religion has been well and exactly, though a little coldly, defined as "right relation to Reality." What is most real behind the appearance of things, that it is with which, for true religion, man needs to be in right relation. And so, if the ultimate reality be a God of wrath and vengeance, man's religion and conduct will take shape accordingly; and wrath and vengeance will be the key for the solution of life's problems; he will, if he is truly religious, reflect the character of his God, and wrath and vengeance will become his practical politics.

But if he comes to conceive that the ultimate Reality is Love, and that God is Love, then it follows of necessity that Love is the key for the solution of life's problems; and Love, put into practice, here on earth, will become man's practical politics. Otherwise he is false to his religion—no longer in right relation to Reality.

**R**ELIGION sprang out of man's apprehension of the unknown, and took form according to man's interpretation of it; and the interpretation he gave to it was anthropomorphic—he first scaled his God to his own notion of what stood for power, and then

## By LAURENCE HOUSMAN

gradually, by slow degrees, to his own notion of something higher—moral power, justice, truth, righteousness, and at last even mercy and forgiveness—but not by any means unconditional mercy and forgiveness; and governed by those conceptions we get a long series of anthropomorphic religions on a gradually ascending moral scale, generally religions of observance, of ritual and sacrifice, faithful fulfilment of which satisfied the god's requirements.

But all those religions were racial and nationalistic, and were used to bolster up race against race and nation against nation; and in doing so they were perfectly honest, because the conception of God as the universal Father had not then entered men's heads; still less the idea that God was Love, and that nothing but Love could rightly express him in man's dealings with man. Religion, like its god, was still sectional and divided. There was no moral conflict between law and religion, as there often is today.

Only here and there, in the most advanced forms of religion—in the Hebrew prophets, and in men like Socrates—did any problems of conscientious objection arise—when conscience claimed to stand above law, and loyalty to God to come before loyalty to the State.

**A**LL those religions of observance, therefore, with their limited conceptions of a god, racial or tribal, having a moral outfit as limited as that of his worshippers, had no difficulty in

being consistent and honest. Even when the gods acquired moral attributes, they were not of a transcendental quality; they did not reveal a new and a higher code—a spiritual discovery for the conduct of life; even at his very best the god was merely like a just and wise ruler with higher powers for the administration of justice and with wider knowledge.

But the case was very different when Christ revealed God to his fol-

Christians who won; while they suffered, they made more converts to their witness for the truth than Rome made martyrs.

**A**ND had the Church not allowed herself to be institutionalized and made the ally and servant of Caesar, her witness to that truth might have remained unstained, undimmed, and might long since have brought God's kingdom to earth.

But she compromised, and thereafter Christianity became a different thing, divided in allegiance between God and Caesar, and, as time went on, accepted more and more, as a matter of course, Caesar's remedies for ill; and these were not Christ's.

Because that acceptance was sanctioned by the Church herself, men's consciences became dulled, and they did not realize—they still do not realize—that in spite of all their worship and devotion and reverence for the person of Christ, the Christian ethic has been lost. Called by Christ for the fulfilment of the law and the prophets to put their faith in a right use of human nature, they rejected the call, and have gone on rejecting it to this day.

That is the stone which the builders refused, and which, if Christianity is ever to live again and become real, must be brought back to its right place and become the headstone of the corner.

## What Is Pacifism?

**T**HE following definitions have been brought to our attention.

**Socialism**—If you have two cows, you give one to your neighbour.

**Communism**—If you have two cows, you give them to the Government and the Government then gives you some milk.

**Fascism**—If you have two cows, you keep the cows and give the milk to the Government; then the Government sells you some milk.

**New Dealism**—If you have two cows, you shoot one and milk the other; then you pour the milk down the drain.

**Nazism**—If you have two cows, the Government shoots you and keeps the cows.

**Capitalism**—If you have two cows, you sell one and buy a bull.

Entries are invited for a competition—without prizes!—for the best definition, on these lines, of Pacifism.

## BRIDGING A GULF

To the Editor of Peace News

**P**ACIFISTS are generally agreed that among the most urgent and immediate tasks which face us is that of placing victimized COs in employment, or otherwise enabling them to obtain a living.

In this respect the Pacifist Service Bureau has excellent intentions, but has failed to do all that it might, particularly in the matter of placing townsmen in agricultural occupations.

There is a wide gulf between urban and rural ways of life, of thought and outlook; and this gulf cannot possibly be bridged—even with unlimited goodwill—by a bureau consisting of correspondence clerks. Such work can only be done by personal contact, and it is here that PPU groups in rural areas can help. It is necessary not only to contact farmers and other prospective employers; but also to help the applicant for employment to "find his feet" by explaining to him those subtle peculiarities of country life and thought which, unexplained, would torment him and drive him back to the town.

However vague this letter may appear, it will be readily understood by most pacifist country-dwellers. Will all those who read it please do what they can to supplement the work of the PSB by providing the contact between rural employers and the strangers in their midst?

CLARENCE FRY

Secretary, Cirencester PPU Group  
41 Latton, Swindon.

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## Vera Brittain

(Continued from page 1)

al. It is: "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him."

Christ did not qualify this instruction, even in the fashion that the few who are genuinely prepared to accept the idea of negotiation usually do qualify it. He did not say: "Agree with thine adversary only when thou art quite certain thou hast got the better of him and art in a favourable position to dictate terms." Nor did he say: "Agree with thine adversary only if he is a pleasant, tolerable adversary, who is prepared to come half, way to meet thee."

Actually, of course, we know that an adversary of this kind would not be a military adversary at all; he would merely be a political opponent whom we were prepared to argue with, but not to destroy. Anyone, however clumsy, can agree quickly with an adversary of this reasonable type. But once we have an adversary in the military sense, he must always be presented as the devil incarnate, or our kindly peace-loving people would never be persuaded to fight him. In the last war, the Kaiser—whom we now regard as a well-mannered old gentleman compared with Hitler—was an arch-criminal whose execution actually became, in 1918, a serious political proposition.

My conscious memory does not go back to the Boer War, when among our opponents were Louis Botha and our now highly respectable friend General Smuts, but it is on record that Charles Swinburne—who was capable of such poems as *Super Flumina Babylonis* and *Watchman, what of the night?*—described the Boers as "dogs agape with jaws aflame", and their wives and children as "whelps and dams of murderous foes."

## TWO-SIDED CONCESSIONS

It is never easy to agree with our adversary in the way, because it is obvious that in these circumstances agreement will not be reached unless we are prepared to make concessions in return for those we exact. We can hardly expect Hitler to concede the restoration of Poland, Bohemia, and his other conquests, unless we are ready at least to discuss such questions as our mastery of the seas, our economic monopolies, the Ottawa agreements, and our control of vital centres of world communications.



Drawing by F. Howard Lewis

It is by no Heaven-born and unchallengeable right of virtue that the British Empire controls the world's oceans and monopolizes certain of its markets—though many liberal-minded people will not even start to discuss negotiation except on the supposition that the British people must retain these advantages in perpetuity. Sometimes I feel that the chief and most urgent task of the pacifist movement is to challenge and eliminate certain rooted assumptions upon which the political thinking of our whole people is consciously or sub-consciously based.

Let us then begin our Christmas examination of the un-Christmaslike spirit at large in the world today by asking—as at least one leading churchman at St. Paul's Cathedral has evidently begun to ask—just what the cost of peace-making must be.

Once we have broken down the stone-wall assumptions of righteous advantages which barricade the roads to constructive thought, and begin to ask where we—as citizens of England and would-be peacemakers—have failed and what we can concede, we are entitled without hypocrisy to number ourselves among the humble followers of the Child whose birth at Bethlehem compels recollection, even by the sinful and warring world which repudiates his teaching and betrays his name.

lowers as the universal Father, making all men brothers, and calling upon them to be as impartial in their benefactions, to good and evil alike, as sun and rain; when he said that God is a spirit, and those that worship him must worship him in that same spirit, not with outward observance but with inward truth.

Christ said he had come to fulfil an imperishable law, a law that could not be changed; fulfilment being necessary because its presentation had hitherto been imperfect. It had been given wrong conditions, wrong materials to work on. But the law was there, obscurely seen, misunderstood, waiting to be rightly applied.

What was that law? We get it from Christ in a single saying: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them; for this is the law and the prophets."

**A**LL down the ages that law, perversely misinterpreted, had been true; it is true still; we see it expressed racially, nationally, socially. Man's reaction to it has darkened all history. What he does to his fellow man, his fellow man does in return: tyranny, rivalry, jealousy, suspicion, violence, cruelty—set going, they all produce their like; when the other man gets his chance, he pays it back in like coin. Vengeance and retaliation have been accepted as the best and most practical way of righting wrong; and they have failed.

War has not taught men to cease from war; it has grown more huge and more horrible in scale. Jealous rivalry in trade and commerce has not added to the real wealth of the nations, it has set up impoverishing barriers. Tyranny has not brought order, or contentment, to the tyrannized; violent revolution has cast out tyranny only to set up tyranny in a new form.

Social neglect and indifference produce criminals—men who quite naturally neglect and are indifferent to that social order which has not given them a fair deal. Yet, when our criminal code has been made more humane, justice more considerate of causes, prisons less stupid and cruel in their anti-social regulations, better results have always followed; there has always been, in response, not an increase but a diminution of crime.

**T**ESTED out with patience and good will, human nature does react in like kind to the treatment it receives. But no social system has ever yet had the spiritual courage to mete out to the human problem in its midst—and still less any nation to fellow nation—that treatment which Christ laid down as the key for the solution here and now of the ills of human society.

Yet when Christianity was young the thing was done, and Christianity survived and won through, having the faith and courage to face, for the demonstration of its truth, pain and persecution and death.

For when one asserts the truth of that law of man's being, that like will produce like—even to Christlikeness—it is not to say that it wins through without trial and suffering. And as there have been countless cases of individuals who have risen superior to man's vengeful and retaliatory expression of that law, so there have been as many—or perhaps more—rulers, authorities, governments, who have not responded to its more spiritual expression; and they have put the righteous and the unresisting to cruel death.

Yet, when the matter was so tried out between the secular power of Rome and the early Christians, it was the



## THE CHRISTHOOD OF MAN

**A**T Christmas the Christian Church celebrates the Incarnation of God. But in its rejoicing at this signal mark of the divine love, it too readily forgets that the Incarnation is also a tribute to the status of humanity. The marvel of the Incarnation is not so much that God became man, as that God could become man. The process of creation had reached a stage at which fellowship was possible between creature and creator, and the True Light, as Saint John calls Christ, was the light that already lighted every man.

Many will be found to profess their belief in the love of God and in the divinity and manhood of Christ, but only a few will include in their creed a faith in the Christhood of man. And yet it is just the neglect of this faith that has caused the Christian religion as it is practised in Europe, to become the desiccated and shrivelled thing it is, for our conception of God cannot be detached from, or held in opposition to, our attitude toward man.

Man's treatment of man is the criterion by which the truth of his conception of God is judged; to act toward our fellows in any way but that of love is in effect to deny the love of God, for love to God and love to man through Christ are one and indivisible.

### Identification

This belief in the Christhood of man is an essential part of the Christian faith. It is not a fantastic or sentimental whimsy; it is fundamental to the teaching of Christ himself. His attitude to humanity was one of self-identification. So exquisite and intense was his sympathy that he could feel as his own tenderness and simplicity and wonder and helplessness of every child, as if they were all part of himself. "Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me."

But his sympathy was not confined to children, or even to his disciples. It went out in complete self-identification to all, even the least of his brethren. He felt the hunger of the starving as if it were his own hunger, the loneliness of the stranger as if it were his own loneliness, the misery of the sick as if he himself were fevered and companionless, the captivity of the prisoner as if he himself were shut out from the blue sky and the fresh wind and the kindly fellowship of human beings.

It may be put even more strongly. To give food to a starving man is to appease the pangs of Christ himself. To say a friendly word to a stranger is to comfort Christ's loneliness. The hungry man is Christ; the lonely man is Christ; every man is Christ.

The Christian's love for his fellows therefore is not prompted by a vague benevolence; it is his response to this fact that every man shares with Christ the glory and mystery of God's creation. He knows that in every human being Christ lives; to persecute his fellow is to weave another crown of thorns; to destroy him is to crucify Christ afresh.

This is the truth about the Incarnation that the Church has been so reluctant to learn. Man is a sharer in the divine nature. The Christhood of man is a basic reality; it is a faith that we must recover or perish.

### Freedom

As an undertone to the present struggle many can detect the cry of humanity for freedom; for relief from its age-long exploitation by employer, dictator, and priest; perhaps most fundamentally of all, for release from its obscene exploitation by war. It is a cry that will grow in depth and intensity, but man's distress will not be assuaged until he learns where to direct his native loyalties. By his

### CAROL.

### The Bethlehemites.

Copyright

John S. Devonne.

Music by EDRED BOOTH, F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M.



- 1 WISE men and Kings in days of old  
Their way to Bethlehem made;  
And gifts of frankincense and gold  
Before the Christ they laid.
- 2 They found Him midst the lowliest things  
Bereft of all His might,  
And hailed Him as the King of Kings,  
The Lord of life and light.
- 3 And what forbids each place on earth  
To be a Bethlehem,  
All men to hail afresh His birth  
Which means so much to them?
- 4 For since His birth, as ne'er before  
Men know that God is Love;  
And share both joy and trouble sore  
With Him in heaven above.

*John S. Devonne is the nom de plume of a reader to whom we are indebted for this carol.*

very constitution he can find no satisfaction in any object lower than God. His very Christhood denies him any other resting place.

To acknowledge the Christhood of man is the first step toward man's emancipation, for the service of God is his perfect freedom. It is the starting point for a revolutionary, in place of a reactionary, Christianity. It supplies both motive and momentum for our faith, and it gives revolution the direction and guidance it requires.

Here is the compelling inspiration that the Christian world needs. If it could really believe, as Christ did, in the Christhood of man, no Christian government could ever think of denying essential rights to human beings on the ground of their race, or class, or religion, or culture.

How differently a Christian government would deal with its outcasts, if it knew for a fact that in them Christ was suffering! How readily, as a service to Christ, would everyone in possession of power, political or economic, accept his responsibility and acknowledge his service to man as a service to God! How swiftly would swords be turned into plowshares!

### Voices

In times of peace we give little attention to the noises and din of traffic and chaffering, but in war all our senses are on the alert, and the faintest vibration may be significant. So perhaps even through the concussions of bombs and shells we shall be able to catch the tone of those voices that would lead us back to the truth we have forgotten.

Once again we may hear the voice

of Christ, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me", and the utterance will be sharpened by those other voices that accompany his. We may hear Turgeniev telling us:

I saw myself, a youth, almost a boy, in a low-pitched wooden church. The slim wax candles gleamed, spots of red before the old pictures of the saints. There stood before me many people, all fair-haired peasant heads. From time to time they began swaying, falling, rising again, like the ripe ears of wheat when the wind in summer passes over them. All at once a man came up from behind and stood beside me. I did not turn toward him, but I felt that the man was Christ. Emotion, curiosity, awe, overmastered me; I made an effort and looked at my neighbour. A face like everyone's, a face like all men's faces. The eyes looked a little upward, quietly and intently; the lips closed, not compressed; the upper lip as if were resting on the other; a small beard parted in two; the hands folded and still; and the clothes on him like everyone's.

"What sort of Christ is this? I thought. 'Such an ordinary, ordinary man. It cannot be.' I turned away, but I had hardly turned my eyes from this ordinary man when I felt again that it was really none other than Christ standing beside me. Suddenly my heart sank and I came to myself. Only then I realized that just such a face is the face of Christ, a face like all men's faces.

And we may hear the song of William Blake:

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love  
All pray in their distress,  
And to these virtues of delight  
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love  
Is God our Father dear;  
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love  
Is Man, his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,  
Pity, a human face,  
And Love, the human form divine,  
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,  
That prays in his distress,  
Prays to the human form divine,  
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form  
In heathen, Turk or Jew;  
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell  
There God is dwelling too.

It is not only to God that he prays, but to the Christ in every man.

To Christ the perfect man and the incarnate God we shall give our adoration and worship; and, if these voices have any meaning for us, we shall give to the Christ in every man our love and our reverence, for Christ's sake and as to Christ.

### J. Connor

Will Taxpayers Please Note?—Asked the Daily Mail, reporting recently a weekly "ordinary" expenditure by this country that constituted a new record. It was for the first week of December, when the "ordinary expenditure" (consisting mainly of the Supply Services and the interest on the National Debt) reached a total of £110,174,337. Total "ordinary" revenue amounted to £23,724,340, income tax showing an increase of a million pounds over the previous week. Other issues than ordinary issues raised £8,732,000. The revenue deficit for the financial year to date had increased, in 12 months, from £54,628,000 to £1,749,607,000.

MARY BARR.

## Christmas POSTPONED

By Mary Gamble

**C**HRISTMAS postponed!" Just before blackout time in London a few weeks ago I saw that announcement on a news vendor's slate. I did not stop to buy a paper, so I imagine it must have referred to the Christmas holiday.

But, as I hurried past, I wondered if the little man, shivering in the raw evening mist, was aware of the colossal truth he had scribbled on his slate. Surely the Festival of Peace must be indefinitely postponed by a world at war.

We cannot go with the Magi to the Manger at Bethlehem and take as our offering bombs and land-mines and shells. We cannot go with the shepherds and worship the Babe when our hands are stained with the murder of babies. We cannot kneel with Mary and Joseph in the stable of the little inn and do reverence to new life when death is master of the world.

And yet Christmas is to be celebrated. For we read that there will be fairy lights in the tubes, and plum puddings and carols in the shelters; and I have no doubt that enterprising shelter marshals will dress up as Santa Claus, and "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" will drown the "music" of the guns.

And as the planes, on their errand of death, zoom over London and Berlin, Hamburg and Southampton, the children of England and Germany will hang up their stockings in the seeking atmosphere and pray that, in spite of the purchase tax, Father Christmas will fill them.

Christmas in the Shelters! The papers will be full of it. It can be nothing but a mockery; and yet I know that if I had to spend Christmas night in a shelter, and if I had a child, I too should want to fill his stocking.

It is a mockery to attempt to celebrate the Festival of Home while homes are being destroyed in nearly all the great cities of Europe.

If we as a nation were really willing to act in the spirit of Christmas we should show our readiness to declare an armistice and discuss the terms of peace. There is not the remotest chance of that happening.

I believe the organized celebration of Christmas by a Government that is waging war to be indeed a mockery; but I also know that the spirit of Christmas will be in the hearts of ordinary men and women and that it will find expression in deeds of goodness and mercy and kindness and love. In that unquenchable spirit lies hope.

So perhaps, after all, it was only a half truth which my news vendor chalked on his slate. The hypocritical celebration of an event which is the very negation of war is abhorrent, but the coming of the spirit of peace into the hearts of men and women cannot be postponed.

Only by worshipping the Babe in our hearts will the horror of bombed babies be brought home. Only by reverencing new life can we sow the seeds of it in the midst of death.

There was no room for the Child in the inn in Bethlehem. There is no room for the child in London and Berlin today. Children are better evacuated—if they remain they become homeless waifs playing around heaps of rubble. As in the stillness of the frosty night two thousand years ago comfort and warmth were found in a humble stable, so it is in the hearts of simple men and women today that I believe peace will be born.



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## BETTER THAN CHRISTMAS CARDS

I AM not sending out any Christmas cards this year. Quite apart from the cost, which is prohibitive, it seems an empty gesture.

Very few are arriving either, which means that others share the same idea. Thousands of people are homeless or living in other people's homes, and perhaps for the first time many will be sharing the festival with strangers.

I had a letter last week offering a home for a tired pacifist to share with the writer the quiet and peace of a country place. In spite of the horrors of destruction and the misery of so many lives, there is, I believe, much more good will abounding this Christmas than ever before. The positive goodness that is being shown to so many suffering people is proof that human beings are basically kind.

Sending a Christmas card, like giving a penny to a blind beggar, is an easy way to salve the social conscience. Fewer cards will mean much more friendship and perhaps a stimulus to the sympathetic side of human nature which is so desperately needed.

### "FEED THE STARVING"

I am simple enough to believe that Christ meant what he said when he commanded his disciples to feed the starving and to clothe the naked. This Christmas will see many people doing this out of the goodness of their hearts, and surely it is only one more step to loving your enemies. "I find it harder to love my friends whom I know than the enemies I do not know."

Christmas will be a difficult time to endure this year. There is so little to be merry about and food and money will be scarce; and yet we shall cease to be human if we do not wish each other a happy Christmas. Whatever others may do, I wish all my friends in the Groups a very happy Christmas, and I believe that inasmuch as we share it with others we shall have that wish granted.

John Barclay

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## Commentary

Edited by "Observer"

## Lord Lothian :: Morrison on Enemies of the State Peace Aims

I AM sorry that Lord Lothian is dead. In July 1939, three weeks or so before he went to New York as Ambassador, I spent a day with him, trying in vain to convince him that the major cause of the coming war was the inherent incapacity of the present national and international organization of society to admit any solution of the problem of unemployment except by war-preparation. The attempt seemed worth while because he had boldly advocated the necessity of limiting national sovereignty.

He listened to me courteously and patiently; but I had the despairing feeling that my whole outlook was alien to him. At the end of our discussion he said that, in his opinion, the basic realities of history were not economic but racial, such as the eternal conflict between Teuton and Slav; and he seemed not to understand me at all when I replied that I did not assert, because I did not believe, that the basic realities of history had always been economic, but that they had become so with the advent of universal power-production.

Nevertheless, though I failed to persuade him, I liked him as a man. I felt that he had a high sense of duty—"noblesse oblige"; and I think that in any peace-settlement he would have been on the side of the angels.

### Pure Nazism

MR. Herbert Morrison's defence of the Government treatment of suspected "fifth columnists" in the Commons on Dec. 11 contained some alarming statements.

He compared those who objected to Fascists being imprisoned indefinitely without trial to the Weimar Government, "which respected very fully the principles which were now being urged in the House"—the fundamental principle of British freedom: no imprisonment without being brought to open trial on a definite charge. He then went on to say that if he had been running the German Government at the time when Hitler was imprisoned for the Munich putsch, "that man would never have got out of prison and he would never have survived. He was an enemy of the State and he ought to have been shot."

There is no mistake about that. It is pure Nazism, as Mr. Beverley Baxter—of all people!—pointed out. Probably, Mr. Morrison considers that it is pure Socialism. It may be the Socialism of his particular brand, infected by the ideology of state-worship and terrorism. But that only shows how incompatible Mr. Morrison's kind of Socialism is with the vital principles of the democracy he claims to be defending. A British Home Secretary who proclaims it as a maxim of government that "enemies of the State ought to be shot" without legal trial, is himself an enemy of the British State, and ought to be—forgiven?

### Impossible as a Condition

COMMANDER King-Hall is one of the many representatives of progressive opinion who have been shocked by Sir Robert Vansittart's recent broadcasts, which he regards as perfectly adapted to the purpose of strengthening German resistance. He would like to weaken that resistance, and he suggests that the Government should address the German and Italian peoples to the effect that, if they collaborate with Britain in overthrowing the Nazi and Fascist regimes, "no attempt will be made by us to prevent them from occupying that position in a free Europe to which they are entitled, and which they will have to occupy if they are to collaborate as equals in the task of reconstruction and organization of peace" (Times, Dec. 13).

Unfortunately—and this is the fatal defect of all progressive war-aims

coupled with the overthrow of Hitler—the Germans have had some. What did it profit them to overthrow the Hohenzollern in 1918, and trust the promises of justice and equal treatment? You cannot expect a great nation to walk into the same trap twice in a generation.

We say we cannot trust Hitler; we forget that the Germans cannot trust us. Any proclamation of idealistic peace-aims which is made dependent on the overthrow of the Nazi regime is therefore worse than useless to the cause of peace.

### Northampton By-Election

NO better testimony to the impression made on thoughtful people by Stanley Seamark's candidature at Northampton could be found than the following paragraph from "A London Diary" in The New Statesman (Dec. 14):—

The Northampton by-election more nearly conformed to the original theory of democracy than any other I have known. No advertising, no appeal to the interests of the electors, no shouting.

Mr. Seamark, the butcher pacifist, seems to be simple and sincere; he has seen the light and felt it his duty not to hide it beneath a bushel. His election address contained no politics except those that followed from his interpretation of Jesus Christ. In his circulated address, he referred, I understand, to Coventry and the evils of bombing, and counter-bombing, but relied on a simple appeal to Christian principle. On polling day he served as usual in his shop. In spite of (or because of?) having no campaign he received over a thousand votes in a town which has had no bombs and which has not done at all badly since the war—rather a remarkable result. There is a strong Nonconformist tradition in Northampton; it is amazing how the influence of an independent and striking character like Bradlaugh perpetuates itself through several generations.

This anti-war opposition was not one that the Communists could support, and they had instructions not to vote for Mr. Seamark. His vote must be considered the honest-to-God support of a small minority which thinks little about the complications of politics; it is apparently larger than the left-wing anti-war group which scored less votes in an industrial area when the candidate was Harry Pollitt!

## W.R.I. Memorial to George Lansbury

THE War Resisters' International, of which George Lansbury was the Chairman, is collecting funds for a memorial to him.

This is to take the form of a farm where conscientious objectors are to be trained for work on the land, and where it is hoped to form a permanent community when days of peace return. The sum of £10,000 is required.

The WRI, which by this means would give help to many in this country, is already aiding those of other nationalities. Refugees from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Belgium, Holland, France Finland, and Italy are assisted, and the Spanish children who were cared for in a home in the Pyrenees are now all provided for. Many refugees also have been helped to emigrate to the New World.

The address of the International is 11, Abbey Road, Enfield, Middlesex.

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